

Human Rights Commission Meeting
May 15, 2014, 6:30-8:30 pm, Bangs Community Center

Present: Gregory Bascomb, Liam Brodigan, Kathleen Anderson, Ingrid Askew, Emily Jung, Sid Ferriera, Liam Brodigan, Carol Ross

Absent: Damon Mallory,

Others: Deb Radway, Carolyn Gardner, Sonji Anderson; Michael Mongeau, Thomas Shuman

Meeting called to order by Gregory Bascomb at 6:30 pm

1. Agenda Review/Additions:
2. Review of February meeting minutes: April 16 and May 7 meeting minutes approved.
3. Old Business
 - Ingrid reported on upcoming reading of Frederick Douglass speech.
 - Emily resigning position to go off to college
 - Damon staying on Commission until fall when he knows where he will be living.
 - Ingrid and Carol will request to be reappointed.
 - Summer Schedule-meeting before picnic on June 15, other summer meeting in July, no meeting in August.
 - Carol working with Thomas, who is interning for the summer, to develop topics and themes for street interviews (human trafficking & slavery, right to privacy, prisoner rights and conditions, wage theft and worker rights, health care, gun control, immigration policies, etc.) Interviews to be conducted around Taste of Amherst weekend and a couple of others. Seeking additional assistance.
 - Library summer reading program—additional books considered. Anyone want to work with Carol? (no response).
4. New Business
 - Racism in the Amherst schools-continued discussion of events affecting Teacher Carolyn Gardner, culminating in another event this week. HRC did not meet after April meeting to discuss as it intended to.
 - Carolyn characterized her workplace as a hostile environment, hostility mostly from colleagues and from lack of communication from administration (timing of notifications, security workers, parent meetings and emails, lack of info on the investigation progress), School Committee and from the Amherst Police, who she has not spoken to at all. We and I deserve time and space for a dialogue, and we are not getting it.
 - Emily- my family has directly experienced a lack of cooperation from the Police and School Administration when dealing with racism.
 - Sid-We met with the Superintendent at our January meeting, and she heard many of our concerns. There needs to be a mechanism for telling people how she is dealing with things, her own performance evaluation being one tool. Concerns persist in this community.
 - Kathleen- a joint meeting of School Committee and HRC is needed. We should send a representative to the next School Committee meeting to ask for a joint meeting in June.
 - Sid to talk to Greg (who had left the meeting) about next steps. Carol asked what the plan would be and are we ready for such a meeting?

Meeting adjourned 8:25 pm. A new notetaker, or note taking rotation will need to commence next meeting.

Deborah Radway
Notetaker